THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI RAM NAIK): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) 4 technical and 39 non-technical employees, employed on contract basis, have been appointed on regular basis against regular vacancies during the last five years.

(c) and (d) Rules/regulations framed by Department of Personnel and Training in the matter of absorption are not applicable to Engineers India Limited (EIL). However, the company has its own rules and regulations, broadly based on Department of Public Enterprises guidelines, and the same are adhered to.

The employees appointed on contract basis are retained till the short-term requirement exists. As and when some regular vacancy arises, such employees are given opportunity to compete for appointment on regular basis.

Schemes for production of oilseeds and pulses

*272. SHRI KAPIL SIBAL:
SHRI BALWANT SINGH RAMOOWALIA:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have stated many schemes for increasing the quantity of production of oilseeds and pulses in the country;

(b) if so, what are the details of these schemes;

(c) whether it is also a fact that there has been less production of oilseeds in the last Kharif crop; and

(d) if so, what is the estimated production alongwith target fixed?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (b) The Central Government is implementing the schemes of Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) & National Pulses Development Project (NPDP) under the aegis of Technology Mission on Oilseeds & Pulses. In addition, National Oilseeds & Vegetable Oils Development (NOVOD) Board is implementing schemes for promotion of traditional oilseeds in non-traditional areas and non-traditional oilseeds in traditional areas. It is also promoting the cultivation of tree-borne oilseeds.

Under these schemes, various incentives by way of subsidies are being provided on critical inputs like production and distribution of seeds, minikits, rhyzobium culture, gypsum/pyrite, improved farm implements, plant protection equipment, sprinkler sets etc. In addition, frontline and general demonstrations are organised on farmers' fields to transfer the production technology.

(c) and (d) A target of 159 lakh MTs of Oilseeds production has been fixed for kharif' 99 As against this, the likely production is estimated at 120.00 lakh MTs.

Cotton growing regions in Madhya Pradesh

273. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Madhya Pradesh has submitted any intensive scheme for the cotton growing regions;

(b) if so, since when the said proposal is pending for approval;

(c) if there is any delay, the reasons therefor; and

(d) by when this proposal will be accorded approval?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) and (d) Yes, Sir. The Government of Madhya Pradesh had submitted a proposal in June, 1999 on cotton development under the new scheme of Technology Mission on Cotton, which is under examination of the Government of India.

Purchase of GAIL's Equity Through GDRs

*274. SHRI RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI:
SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY:

Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether, despite CAG critcising the Government for disinvesting shares of PSUs at prices lower than real prices, Government agreed to the deal with MNCs like British Gas, Enron, Templeton, Enron and Fidelity who had purchased 20 per cent of GAIL's equity through global GDRs; and

(b) the justification for selling the national assets in the foreign market at throwaway prices instead of offering them to the Indian investors?